

NEWFOUND-
LAND.

Despatch from the Secretary of State.

— No. 5. —

No. 5.

(No. 5.)

Right Hon. H.
Labouchere, M.P.,
to Governor Sir A.
Bannerman.
28 January 1858.
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COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Honourable *H. Labouchere* to Governor
Sir A. Bannerman.

Sir,

Downing-street, 28 January 1858.

I HAVE to acknowledge your despatch, No. 95* of the 8th December, trans-
mitting a Minute of Council, in which it is proposed that, with a view to
encourage emigration to Newfoundland, the provisions of the Passenger Act
should be relaxed in favour of vessels conveying emigrants to that island.

On this subject I have to observe that the requirements of the Passenger Act
are necessarily framed with reference not to an average, but to a maximum
voyage; and that though the voyage between Ireland and Newfoundland may
be ordinarily performed in from 15 to 30 days, it undoubtedly extends very
often to a much longer period; but even assuming that 30 days were the limit
of the voyage, it would be no justification for curtailing the space to be allowed
to the passengers for neglecting the ventilation, for giving up the life-boat, or
the fire-engine, or for any of the other relaxations which are applied for; on the
contrary, as the emigration to Newfoundland would be carried on in small
vessels, and as the voyage is by no means free from danger, it seems to me that
particular attention is necessary to the points specified above, to ensure the
well-being of the passengers.

Enclosure.

The question moreover arises, whether there is any reason why Her Majesty's
Government should stimulate emigration to Newfoundland by exceptional
arrangements. I annex a statement of the emigration to the island in the 16
years ending in December 1856. It will be seen that in the six years preceding
1847 the emigration averaged 516 a year, while in the nine years following it
averaged only 197; but the variations in the numbers appear to show that the
falling off is rightly attributed by you to a failure of the demand for labour,
and not to an increase in the cost of passage arising from greater stringency
in the law. You state that "from one or two successful fisheries" the island
has now become prosperous; but you add afterwards that "fisheries are pre-
carious, and two or three bad seasons might bring along with them the same
want of labour and its consequences which took place some years ago." Under
such circumstances it would not be desirable that Her Majesty's Government
should interfere to give an unusual impulse to emigration to Newfoundland,
since they would thereby make themselves to a certain extent responsible for
the employment of those who might proceed thither.

On the whole, I am of opinion that the particular relaxations of the law
applied for could not be conceded with safety to the emigration, and that there
is no sufficient ground to justify the interference of Her Majesty's Government
in any other way.

I have, &c.
(signed) *H. Labouchere*.

Enclosure in No. 5.

Encl. in No. 5.

STATEMENT of Emigration to *Newfoundland*, for the 16 Years ending December 1856.

Year.	No.	Year.	No.
1841 - - - -	336	1849 - - - -	87
1842 - - - -	490	1850 - - - -	345
1843 - - - -	448	1851 - - - -	241
1844 - - - -	684	1852 - - - -	209
1845 - - - -	618	1853 - - - -	173
1846 - - - -	523	1854 - - - -	95
1847 - - - -	993	1855 - - - -	94
1848 - - - -	343	1856 - - - -	215